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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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BALTIMORE MAN SENTENCED FOR IDENTITY THEFT

Baltimore, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced that Charles Allen Mitchell, age 39, of Baltimore, Maryland was sentenced today by U.S. District Court Judge J. Frederick Motz to 71 months in prison followed by 3 years of supervised release for credit card fraud.

On July 13, 2004 Mitchell pleaded guilty to the single count of the federal indictment which charged him with engaging in identity theft through credit fraud from September 14, 2001 until December of 2002. The United States Secret Service determined that Mitchell obtained valid credit card numbers from contacts he had at retail businesses, such as rental car agencies and restaurants. Using these stolen credit cards, he purchased more than \$200,000 worth of merchandise over the telephone for items such as office furniture, tools, appliances and outdoor machinery. The stores where he made the purchases were primarily located in Maryland, Virginia, Ohio and South Carolina. Once the products were ordered under an assumed name, he would have them shipped to houses in Baltimore City where a confederate would be stationed to accept delivery. He then sold the stolen property on Ebay or at pawn shops.

In giving the maximum sentence allowable under the federal sentencing guidelines, Judge Motz noted Mitchell's prior convictions for fraud and the significant impact identity theft exacts on financial institutions and individual consumers.

This case was investigated by the United States Secret Service and the Baltimore Police Department and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Martin Clarke.